



UNIFORMED SERVICES UNIVERSITY OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES
4301 JONES BRIDGE ROAD
BETHESDA, MARYLAND 20814-4799



Office of the Dean
School of Medicine
SOM-DPM-001-07
June 6, 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR FACULTY, STAFF, MEDICAL STUDENTS

SUBJECT: Executive Curriculum Committee

ABSTRACT

This Dean's Policy Memorandum prescribes the authority, composition, functions and responsibilities of the Executive Curriculum Committee (ECC).

A. Reissuance and Purpose. This memorandum reissues School of Medicine (SOM), Dean's Policy Memoranda SOM-DPM-002-06^a, "Executive Curriculum Committee," dated August 11, 2006 (hereby canceled).

B. References. *See Enclosure 1.*

C. Applicability. This instruction applies to the undergraduate medical education program of the SOM.

D. Definitions. *See Enclosure 2.*

E. Policy and Responsibilities.

1. Undergraduate Medical Education: The SOM will fulfill the mission established by the Department of Defense and will meet the standards established by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME)^b for accreditation of educational programs for the Doctor of Medicine degree.

a. Educational Mission: The mission of the USUHS-SOM is to educate and train competent physicians qualified to serve the needs of the uniformed services of the United States by providing quality educational programs. The institution will place a high priority on the special training needs of military medical personnel in contingency, combat, tropical and deployment medicine, as well as peacetime medicine.

b. Faculty Mission: The faculty and the various departments of the SOM are responsible for the design, planning, preparation and presentation of the curriculum, with coordination oversight by the ECC and with approval of the Office of the Dean.

2. Executive Curriculum Committee: Integrated institutional responsibility for the overall design, management, and evaluation of a coherent and coordinated curriculum leading to the M.D. degree is vested in the SOM Executive Curriculum Committee (ECC), which is a standing committee of the SOM. The ECC, with the approval of the SOM dean, has the authority and responsibility to evaluate and implement recommendations of accrediting bodies such as the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and LCME and to insure that the curriculum meets LCME accreditation standards at all times. The ECC will:

- a. Establish the SOM's educational objectives and general guidelines for curricular content.
- b. Review the academic courses and clerkships with regard to content, format, teaching methods, course materials and methods for verifying that students have met identified learning objectives, and institute revisions as appropriate.
- c. Develop and modify, as needed, policies and procedures regarding the evaluation of student performance.
- d. Assess performance in the teaching program in concert with appropriate academic units, faculty and/or academic departments.
- e. Establish, charge, and appoint members to standing curriculum subcommittees of the ECC.
- f. Approve or modify substantive recommendations made by the M1, M2, and M3/M4 curriculum subcommittees concerning the curriculum or evaluation of students.

3. Curriculum Subcommittees. Curriculum subcommittees for the M1, M2, and M3/M4 portions of the curriculum are responsible for oversight of their respective segments of the undergraduate medical education program. These subcommittees report to the ECC and are composed of a multidisciplinary and student membership appointed by the ECC. They submit annual reports to the ECC on the findings of their curriculum review. Subcommittee decisions regarding curriculum change are reached by majority vote, with each member having one vote. Subcommittee recommendations regarding substantive curriculum change are submitted to the ECC for approval prior to taking action. The subcommittees are charged by the ECC to review the curriculum, ensuring that:

- a. accreditation standards are being met
- b. course objectives support the overall School of Medicine educational objectives
- c. teaching and assessment methods appropriately support the educational objectives
- d. curriculum content is coordinated across courses
- e. overall student performance on stated objectives is being achieved

4. The Dean of the School of Medicine. The dean is the chief academic officer of the

SOM and is responsible for the development and administration of policy and procedures concerning academic affairs, including curriculum. DoD Directive 5105.45^c defines academic affairs as “faculty appointments, promotions and organization, awarding of degrees, curriculum design and implementation, academic requirements for admission and graduation, and related matters vital to the academic well-being of the USUHS.”

- a. The dean has final authority in appointments to the ECC.
- b. The dean exercises approval authority for recommendations of the ECC.
- c. The dean or a member of his staff will review and respond to recommendations from the ECC within 30 days. Responses may include concurrence and approval, recommendations for remediation, or rejection.

5. Department Chairs: Each course, clerkship, selective, or elective course in the undergraduate medical curriculum is **primarily** assigned to one academic department for management. The department chair, together with the course/clerkship director, is responsible for establishing objectives, designing content and presenting each course/clerkship assigned to his/her department and for assuring that the performance of students is evaluated in an appropriate and timely manner and in accordance with institutional policy. The department chair is also responsible for supporting course/clerkship directors with requisite faculty and specifically for assigning teaching responsibilities to faculty members and for allocating departmental resources required for the courses/clerkships/selectives/electives assigned to their departments.

6. Course or Clerkship Directors: Course/clerkship directors for interdepartmental courses will be appointed by the dean. Course/clerkship directors for departmentally-sponsored courses will be appointed by the responsible department chair, with approval from the dean.

7. Faculty Members: Faculty members are the content experts in the individual basic science and clinical science disciplines and collectively are responsible for the SOM curriculum. The processes of curricular design, implementation and evaluation, therefore, involve broad participation by the faculty both at the departmental level and at the level of the SOM. Every assigned faculty member is responsible, usually working with the course/clerkship directors, for fulfilling their assigned teaching responsibilities in undergraduate curriculum.

F. Organization.

1. Membership:

a. The ECC will consist of 17 members, all with vote. However, the committee chair votes only as a tiebreaker.

b. Committee membership (appointed) is as follows:

- (1) Five basic science faculty selected by the dean from a list of department chair nominees, faculty senate nominees, and volunteers
- (2) Five clinical science faculty selected by the dean from a list of department

chair nominees, faculty senate nominees, and volunteers

(3) Two MS4 students selected by the associate dean for student affairs with approval of the dean

c. Committee membership (*ex officio*) is as follows:

- (1) director, interdisciplinary curriculum
- (2) associate dean for medical education (committee chair)
- (3) associate dean for student affairs (or his/her representative)
- (4) associate dean for clinical affairs
- (5) assistant dean for simulation education

2. Terms of Members:

a. All faculty members shall be appointed to three-year terms, the term beginning at the start of the academic year. The dean may reappoint faculty members to serve consecutive terms.

b. Terms will be staggered so that one basic science and one clinical science member will be appointed or reappointed each year.

c. Students are appointed for a one-year term.

G. Procedures.

1. Subcommittees, Working Groups, Task Forces, Topic Groups: The ECC may, with concurrence of the dean, organize standing subcommittees, *ad hoc* working groups, task forces, topic groups, and other special groups to assist in gathering and collating information, assessing or designing prospective educational programs, conducting studies, evaluating programs, or conducting other tasks necessary to accomplish its educational initiatives.

2. ECC: The ECC meets at the call of the committee chair, or at least monthly during the academic year. Recommendations to the dean are accomplished with majority vote. Seven members constitute a quorum. Minutes of each meeting are circulated to all ECC members, associate deans, assistant deans, the USUHS president, academic department chairs, the faculty senate president, the Student Advisory Council and the dean.



Larry W. Laughlin M.D., Ph.D.
Dean, School of Medicine

REFERENCES

- (a) SOM-DPM-002-06, "Executive Curriculum Committee," dated August 11, 2006 (hereby canceled)
- (b) *Functions and Structure of a Medical School*, Liaison Committee on Medical Education, June 2006
- (c) DoD Directive 5105.45, (Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS)," March 9, 2000

DEFINITIONS

A. Curriculum: Curriculum is defined as the designated course of instruction, including all planned educational and evaluative experiences for the undergraduate medical students. It involves the specification and sequencing of required, selective and elective courses/clerkships, the assignment of instructional hours, and the determination of academic credits. In most cases one academic department is assigned **primary** responsibility for each course/clerkship in the curriculum. The pre-clinical sciences are mostly offered during the first two years of the curriculum. The clinical sciences are offered across the four years of the curriculum, but mostly in the last two years.

B. Faculty: Faculty is defined as the aggregate group of professionals (physicians, scientists, teachers and administrators) appointed and approved to develop and present the curriculum, and together with the dean, define the level of achievement that must be attained by each graduate to receive the Doctor of Medicine degree.